



Research Plan on Study to Improve Outreach Efforts Per Senate Bill 512



Commissioner Committee on Emerging Trends

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Senate Bill 512 (Public Utilities Code 1711)

“Except in adjudication cases, the bill would require the commission, before determining the scope of the proceeding, where feasible and appropriate, to seek the participation of those who are likely to be affected by a decision in the proceeding. **The bill would, until January 1, 2020, require the Policy and Planning Division of the commission to undertake one or more studies of outreach efforts undertaken by other state and federal utility regulatory bodies and to make recommendations to the commission to promote effective outreach, including metrics for use in evaluating success.**”

- News and Outreach Office was given delegated authority to do this work and is coordinating with PPD
 - Report Authors in the News and Outreach Office:
 - Cindy Nelson, Business and Community Outreach
 - Ravinder Mangat, Public Advisor’s Office





Define Outreach

Define “outreach” for purposes of this report based on the language of SB 512

Recommended Definition: Communication with stakeholders regarding CPUC proceedings pre-decision-making to obtain input and additional parties to proceedings.

- Would not include programmatic campaigns (e.g., Energy Upgrade California) or outreach conducted by utilities; these could be undertaken in a subsequent effort, if desired





Research Targets

Research other “state and federal utility regulatory bodies” to engage and query, including:

- California: California Energy Commission, California Environmental Protection Agency/California Air Resources Board, California Office of Emergency Services, Department of Water Resources, Department of Motor Vehicles, Consumer Affairs, Coastal Commission, etc.
- Other States: Other states utility commissions (utilize NARUC as appropriate)
- Federal: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Federal Communications Commission, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, USDA

Other possible entities to engage:

- Publicly owned utilities in California (SFPUC, SMUD, etc.)
- Investor-owned or privately owned utilities in California (PG&E, SDG&E, SCE, small water/electric/telco companies, etc.)
- Utilities in other states





Research Questions

- What methods do you use to conduct outreach to consumers, local government officials, the Legislature, and other stakeholders to obtain feedback into your proceedings/processes/decision-making? (Could include public hearings/events, social media, email blasts, website/blog, etc.)
- Do you have the capability to allow the public to submit comments online? If so, are those comments made public on your website? If so, are they reviewed/redacted or do they immediately go online once submitted? What system do you use for online comments (cost)?
- How many outreach events/activities do you undertake in per year?
- What is your outreach budget per year?
- How many employees do you have conducting outreach?
- Which social media platforms do you use as part of your outreach efforts?
- What are the metrics you use in evaluating outreach?
- Best practices/tips
- Others?





Key Research Steps

- Obtain responses via phone calls, emails, online survey
- Record all responses and analyze common themes and note “outside-the-box” activities, as well as key metrics and significant outcomes
- Conduct any follow-up phone calls with additional questions
- Start forming recommendations based on impressive outcomes, and note the metrics used to measure success (to support the recommendations)





Timeline

- March 13-31: Compile contacts database, finalize questions, create online survey
- April 1-June 12: Conduct research, make phone calls, send out survey, record notes, analyze information, form recommendations, update timeline and report outline (as needed)
- June 12-July 20: Write draft report
- July 20-Aug. 1: Office management review of report
- Aug. 1-21: Report finalized by authors
- Aug. 21: Final report due to office management
- Aug. 31: Report made public and posted to CPUC website

